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INTRODUCTION



Over the past two hundred years in Ontario, our rush towards the future has often destroyed features of our past - wiping out places, buildings and traditions which made our history and greatly contributed to what we are today.

In response to this, the Ontario Government created the Ontario Heritage Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, to support and promote understanding of Ontario's rich and unique heritage.

The Foundation helps ensure Ontario's citizens full enjoyment of their past, both now and in the future, by giving financial and practical help to private individuals and public bodies involved in heritage conservation activities, and by accepting stewardship of gifts given to the people of this province.

It is guided by a board of private citizens, representing all parts of the province; each appointed because of a strong interest and ability in the field of heritage conservation.

Architecturally or historically significant buildings are some of the most visible reminders of our past that we have. By supporting the conservation of important buildings, the Foundation safeguards a valuable part of Ontario's past. It also encourages communities to take an imaginative look at the way they were and put them to modern-day use.



ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION

Buildings of historical or architectural significance are a recognized asset to any community. Sometimes, though, the condition of such buildings and the costs involved in bringing them up to present building standards seals their fate. Through grants or loans, the Foundation encourages conservation of important buildings.

Practical advice is also available to organizations and individuals, including help in establishing local architectural conservation programs. These programs work to protect, restore, enhance and maintain buildings and areas of historical or architectural interest in a community.

Some of the grants made by the Foundation have helped with:

- Conversion and restoration of the former Norfolk County Court House to serve as a town hall for Simcoe
- Preservation of the ruins of St. Raphael's Church, Glengarry County, built in 1821 and gutted by fire in 1970
- Feasibility studies related to new uses for the former Town Hall, Exeter, and the Schneider House in Kitchener

- A film in association with the Young People's Theatre, Toronto, which is located in a 90-year-old industrial building
- Reconstruction of the historic facade of Port Hope's 34-36 Walton Street after the building was gutted by fire.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION

Archaeology plays an increasingly valuable role in exploring and preserving Ontario's past. It is useful in piecing together technological, economic and social histories; giving us a clearer understanding of how we arrived at the present. Particular studies assist us in land use planning and in the reconstruction of heritage properties.

The Foundation gives grants in aid of archaeological and educational and promotional projects in the field, as well as professional advice to groups and individuals engaged in the full range of scholarly and community-oriented projects with an archaeological component.

The Foundation is also responsible for advising the Minister of Citizenship and Culture on issuing licences for archaeological projects and on designating significant sites.

Projects which have received support from the Foundation include:

- A graduate student's research into the prehistory of the Fort Severn area
- A local dive club's recording of the undisturbed wreck of the schooner "Annie Falconer"



People, places, events and traditions are celebrated across Ontario. Plaque unveilings often generate a week of heritage activities; displays act as a basic core for much larger community events; festivals encourage greater participation in heritage conservation, while publications reach generations of today about their unique and varied past.



HISTORICAL CONSERVATION

Interest in local history is booming. The Foundation works with communities across the Province to recognize and celebrate their heritage and increase awareness of Ontario's history.

In supporting historical conservation, the Foundation provides grants to groups and individuals to carry out historical research and develop publications, heritage conferences, travelling displays and special projects.

In addition, the Foundation stages regional heritage festivals that inspire audiences to take pride in their past and protect their heritage.

Public recognition of historical sites has resulted in close to 1000 plaques being erected to commemorate people, places, buildings and events of provincial significance. The subjects identified were suggested by interested people and organizations, or have resulted from the Foundation's own research into our history and culture. If a subject is approved, the Foundation assists local sponsors in arranging a formal public unveiling ceremony.

- Some of the activities undertaken and/or assisted by the Foundation have resulted in:
 - A permanent display on the Marine history of the Bruce Peninsula (Bruce County Museum, Southampton)
 - Publications on the history of several Ontario communities including Kenora, Broughdale, Orillia, Ramore
 - The Regional Heritage Conference of the Kawartha
 - A travelling photographic exhibit on Sudbury's multicultural history
 - A major campaign to save Ontario's historic courthouses.

HERITAGE TRUST

The Heritage Trust looks after heritage property owned by the Foundation. This property, held 'in trust' for the people of Ontario, comprises significant historic buildings, natural areas, artifacts and works of art, most acquired by gift or bequest from public-spirited donors.

Preservation of Heritage buildings in Foundation ownership is assured through sympathetic restoration and re-use, based on careful research and study. In some instances, buildings of particular public interest or value have been opened as museums or to serve community purposes; some are preserved through rental to private custodian-tenants. Almost all of the Foundation's collection of art and artifacts is on long-term loan to museums, art galleries and libraries across the province.

The Trust is also responsible for heritage easements acquired by the Foundation on properties of provincial heritage importance. These agreements allow the Foundation to protect properties in the long-term against demolition or unsympathetic alteration. Many of the Foundation's architectural easements have been obtained in return for restoration grants.



The people of Ontario own historic buildings, natural heritage areas, artifacts and works of art. Mostly acquired by donation or bequest, the buildings and heritage areas are generally made available for community use while cultural properties are placed on long-term loan with various public institutions. In this way Ontarians may enjoy important assets from their past that they might not otherwise have access to.

Over 2000 acres of natural area and scenic lands are presently under Foundation protection. In cooperation with the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and other agencies, the Foundation has embarked on an intensified program to protect Ontario's natural heritage. This program places special emphasis on soliciting donations of land and signing conservation easements with private landowners.

Properties which are presently open to the public include:

- The Niagara Apothecary, Niagara-on-the-Lake, a 19th century drugstore
- Homewood, near Maitland, the 1800 home of one of eastern Ontario's first doctors
- Sheppard's Bush Conservation Area, Aurora
- J. Albert Bauer Memorial Scenic Area, Muskoka.

Examples of the Foundation's holdings of cultural properties are the Firestone Art Collection, Ottawa; the Moore Collection in the London Regional Art Gallery, London; the Weinstein 1717 "Windsor" Stradivarius violin, and part of the Thomas Fisher rare book collection.



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